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Friends, and all People,

CConsider: Grieve not Gods Spirit, nor limit the Holy One; hurt not his Annointed Prophets, do his People no harm; destroy not the Inheritance of God; Afflict not the Righteous, neither stop your Ears at the Cry of the Oppressed; neither root out the Saints of the Most High; take not away the Lives of the Innocent and Just from the Earth; neither destroy the Inheritance of God; For the Righteous that suffer, are blessed: Neither oppress the Meek of the Earth, nor such as would live peaceably in the Land. Oh! be not a praise to the evil-doers, but a terror: Divide Justice and Judgement a-right; turn not against them that fear the Lords Name; neither let the rude people breake up the Meetings of the Faithful, whose delight is in Virtue and Piety, and serving the Lord. Think not to secure your selves by compelling the Lambs of Christ to transgress his Commands, and so forcing them into Sin, Evil, and Condemnation; and if you cast the Lambs of Christ into Prison, Christ saith, They must go into everlasting Flames of Fire that did not visit him in Prison; So consider whither you must go in the end, that cast him into prison that wishes your good: This we know, the wicked are sealed to perdition, and decreed for Condemnation, Wrath, Wo, Plagues and Judgements.

Therefore let all men fear and tremble before the Most High God, for the Righteous are sealed by the Spirit of Promise, to life everlasting. And this we know, the Scriture saith, That no Lyar, Adulterer, Covetous, Idolater, hath any part or inheritance in the Kingdom of G

that is everlasting; and that all Dogs, Lyars, and unrighteous ones, and Wicked ones, have their part and portion in the Lake that burns with fire and brimstone.

And take heed again, because God hath given you plenty, ease, fulness, and blessings of the outward Creation and Creatures, if you turn these Mercies not to a right End, the Mighty God of Heaven by his Arm and Power, may bring Sickness, Plagues, and strange distempers amongst you; it cannot be otherwise looked for: For what Swearing, Curfing, Wickedness, Violence, Pleasures, Vanities, people are running into, which carryes them to forget Gods Mercies; Therefore they may look for the Plague. For look into both City and Countrey, and see what strange Diseases and Distempers are falling among people, which astonishes them that love God and goodness, who are alwayes prepared for the hand of Lord; and of it takes notice; and for the good of all people are their desires and prayers.

Remember when you are on your Sick-beds, and Death-beds, when torments, miseries, and troubles, and anguish takes hold upon you for what you do, and did against them that desire to live godly and righteously, and would offend no one in truth and righteousnesse, but would do the Will of God, that is pleasing in his sight, and keepe in the Commands of Christ: And for this Cause do they suffer by you (that be in prosperity) and the rude people.

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And look how the Prisons are filled with the righteous and harmless ones; and look how your streets are filled with Violence, and unprofitable talkers, and fruits of Unrighteousness, that it is almost an hard thing for a sober man that loves God and goodness, to walk them.

Oh how is Modesty banished, and Sobriety banished, and Virrue, and Goodness, and Piety, out of the hearts of people! And how are they filled with derision, scorn, mocks, threats, and reproaches, with which they load the innocent! Where is the terror to Evil-doers? Oh

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how is that wanting (*to wit*) Righteousness running down the streets like streams! Oh where is the place now for the Innocent, the Lambs of Christ, the Annointed ones to be found, but in Goals & Houses of Corrections, Holes, Dungeons, lying on boards and straw, men and women put together without the bounds of modesty; nor the liberty granted to (several of) them, as to Murtherers and Felons: Doth this shew the power of Godliness that was amongst the Apostles in the primitive times? But oh! our hearts are broken for you, that you might see your selves, and that you might prise your time while you have it; and do say, The Lord lay not these things to your Charge, which against us you have acted; And can say, *Father forgive them, they know not what they do*: And can bear you record, *You have a Zeal, but not according to true knowledge*: For the Apostles, and Christ, and the Churches in the primitive times, their Zeale never led them to persecute any, as the *Jews* and *Cain* did, amongst whom Christs entertainment was in the Stable and Manger, as ours is now in the Prisons and Dungeons; but we can suffer all these things patiently. So the Lord lay not these things to your charge in the end, which if he do, they will be heavy; for as it is said, *It were better a Millstone were hanged about their necks, and they cast into the Sea, then to offend one of these little ones.* We are friends to all your souls, and your eternal good, and desire the everlasting good and happiness of all men upon the Earth, & would that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledg of the truth.

Amort Stodart, *John Feilder,*
Bryan Wilkinson, *Ellis Hookes.*

DId not the Council of the *Jews* give heed unto *Gamaliel*'s Counsel concerning the Apostles, whose counsel was, *If they were of God, they would stand; if not, it would come to nought*; and bid them *take heed, lest they were found fighters against God*; And if it were of God, they could not overthrow it? And to this moderate *Gamaliel* they all agreed, and set the Apostles at liberty. And *Gamaliel* instanced to the Council, *Theudeas* and *Judas* of *Galilee*, which had come to nought; therefore if the Apostles were not of God, they wou'd not stand. Oh that therewere such a Moderate spirit among the Christian Rulers, *(so called)* and such a distinction as there was in this *Gamaliel*, who will rise up in judgement against many that have not his Moderation and Patience; yet in words profess themselves beyond *Gamaliel*; but of his life short, *Acts* 4.

Paul when he was questioned by the chief Captain, whether hewas not that *Egyptian* that ledout into the wilderness the 4000. men that were *Murderers*, then *Paul* declared he was a *Jew*; & the Captain did not hastily number him among the *Egyptian* murderers, but suffered him to speak to the people; which shewed a Noble & Moderate Spirit, *Acts* 21.28. Oh that there was such a spirit in them that eall themselves *Christians*, who think themselvs beyond this Captain in words, but are short of his Moderation. *Ananias*, with the Elders, and *Tertullus* the *Orator*, told *Fœlix*, *that they had found Paula pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition*; and yet the moderation of *Fœlix* did not deliver *Paul* into the *Jews* hands; and he found more moderation among the Heathen, then he did of the

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great professing Jews; for the Jews could not prove those things they accused *Paul* of; Neither can these things be proved against us, that we are Plotters: and if we had but the Liberty that *Paul* had. All that are Prisoners, and all our Accusers brought face to face before the Rulers, and let us see what any one hath against us; for it is below an *English* man and a Christian, that so many should lye in Prison for the worship of God: And we believe it is contrary to Law that so many should be sent to Prison, and kept in Prison, without any Warrant or Mittimus, as there are now about two thousand in prison, taken up out of their houses, streets and beds, many sober people that desires to live godly and peaceably, whose lives and examples the world cannot bear, though Religion they hold up by the same words that declare the same life that we live in.

And as concerniug Meetings, the Pharisees, the Sadduces, and the very Heathen suffered the Christians in the primitive Times, to meet upon Hills, Mountains, High-wayes, by the Rivers and Ships, as *Paul* did at *Rome*, where the Emperors Seat was; he was suffered to preach two yeares together in his own hired house among the Heathen; and Christ & the Apostles were suffered to meet from House to House, and preach in *Jerusalem* among the Jews, though they met by thousands. And the Church was in *Aquila* and *Priscilla*'s House. And the Christians now, that think themselvs wiser, fuller grown, and of a greater age then the Churches in the primitive times, cannot suffer the tender people of God to meet in Houses now, but call it Heresie. Will not they rise up in judgment against you, that suffer-

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ed the Apostles to meet in that time, beyond whom you profess your selves to be in words, but are short of their life?

And concerning Swearing, our *yea* is *yea*, and *nay*, *nay*; and if we be found breakers of that, then let us suffer as for breaking an *Oath*; now it is evident, that it is for Conscience-sake that we cannot swear at all: For many hundreds of our Friends have been imprisoned, & suffered other wrongs, because they could not swear in *Oliver*'s days, and the other changeable Powers since him, several Oaths being put to them: and what we promise unto the King, he will finde us more faithful to perform, then many that out of fear turn under every Power, and swear to every Power.

Is now the Preachers preaching up *Artaxerxes* Decree (a Heathen King) for a Gospel-Command among Christians, which was onely to the *Jews*, for the building their outward Temple: Oh that men should not blush to hear it! What, to banish! What, to take away goods and lives from them that do not obey *Artaxerxes* Decree! Might not Christ's Doctrine and the Apostles convince you? Did he not rebuke the Zeale of such who would have fire to come down from Heaven to consume such as were contrary-minded to him? And did not the Apostle say, they *wrestled not with flesh and blood*? And did not Christ say, the Temple should be thrown down that was set up by *Artaxerxes* Decree, and not one stone left upon another? And did not the Apostles go into the Temple to bring people off from the Temple, and tel them that the Most High dwelt not in Temples made with mens hands, & that their bodies were the Temples of God? And was not *Ste-*

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phen ſtoned to death for denying the Temple, & witneſſing Chriſt the Subſtance, *Act.7*? Yea that Temple which was ſet up by *Artaxerxes* Decree, & them that did not obey it, were to be hanged or baniſhed, or goods taken away. So all people may ſee that this was to the *Jews* from the Heathen, and not to the Chriſtians; & by this Doctrine you may juſtifie that the Apoſtles did ill in preaching the Name of Chriſt when the Council forbad them. And we do challenge all the Prieſts in Chriſtendom for to make it good, and give us an Example where ever the Apoſtles, that came before Emperors, Kings, & Powers, that preached up this for Goſpel or Doctrine, or preached it among themſelves that were gathered into one body, into the faith and belief of Truth as it was in Jeſus, who came to ſave mens lives & give liberty, and not to ſpoil mens goods; that was never preached up by Chriſt & the Apoſtles, but ſuch as are Miniſters of the Law, & Heathens Decrees, & builders of the Jews Temples, which the Apoſtles and Chriſt brought them off from Heathens Decrees, and the Law, and the *Jews* Temples, and Types, and brought them to the ſubſtance (*Chriſt*) & ended them.

And why do you not go and do the *Jews* work, if you be *Jews*, and build the Temple; which thing doth not belong to Chriſtians, but to you that preach *Artaxerxes* Decree; and you that preach that for Goſpel, knows not what it is; and preach from him, and not from Chriſt; and that people that are led by you, are led into Heatheniſm; who build up that which Chriſt and the Apoſtle throw down.

THE END.

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